

Bridget Eileen Madden
H5929
In favor of The Doula Reimbursement Act

To Chairperson Abney and members of the House Committee on Finance,

My name is Bridget Eileen Madden and I live in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. I write today in strong support of Budget Article 12 Section 12d and bill H5929, The Doula Reimbursement Act.

This budget article and bill are crucial to improving the health and safety of pregnant individuals, particularly Black and Brown families.

A doula is a nonmedical professional trained in childbirth who provides emotional, physical, and informational support to a person who is expecting, is experiencing labor, or has recently given birth. A doula's purpose is to help people have a safe, memorable, and empowering birthing experience. This bill has been crafted collaboratively by doulas, birthing families, community organizers, doula advocates, and legislators, I support a bill that reflects the ongoing input of these key stakeholders.

Research has shown that doulas:

- Reduce premature births and newborn illnesses
- Increase black maternal health by providing quality and consistent care in labor and delivery
- Reduce health disparities for Black and Brown pregnant people
- Decrease Postpartum depression

Here at the state house, we have had many passionate debates about the rights of pregnant people. People on both sides of that issue should well agree on this: we need to improve health outcomes for those who do choose to give birth, and their infants. It is unacceptable that infant and mortality rates in the richest country are as high as they are in this country. The Doula Reimbursement Act would work on improving these currently unacceptable health outcomes.

In closing, I urge you to support Budget Article 12 Section 12d and bill H5929 The Doula Reimbursement Act.

Sincerely,

Bridget Eileen Madden
Woonsocket, RI